

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2, 6, and 10 without prejudice, and amend claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11-12 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A communication distribution controlling method distributing one communication to any of a plurality of relay devices, ~~which can relay~~ capable of relaying the one communication, in correspondence with a connection request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, comprising the steps of:

receiving a communication connection request from a client;

determining from an identifier written in a communication connection request, whether or not a communication connection ~~corresponding to the~~ used commonly for passing communications of a same one series of communications is established ~~according to an identifier written in the communication connection request~~; and

connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay destination of an established communication connection; if the communication connection is established.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) ~~The communication distribution controlling method according to claim 2, further comprising~~ A communication distribution controlling method distributing one communication to any of a plurality of relay devices capable of relaying the one communication in correspondence with a connection request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, comprising the steps of:

- receiving a connection request of an initial communication within a series of communications from a client;
- establishing a communication connection for the communication requested to be connected;
- connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay destination of the established connection; and
- notifying a client side of an identifier corresponding to identifying the established connection as an so as to have the same identifier to be written in into connection requests of communications subsequent to follow the initial communication.

4. (Original) The communication distribution controlling method according to claim 3, further comprising:

- monitoring an elapsed time from when the initial communication within the series of communications from the client is disconnected; and

invalidating the communication connection corresponding to the series of communications, and the identifier corresponding to the communication connection, when the elapsed time exceeds a predetermined value.

5. (Currently Amended) A communication distribution controlling apparatus distributing one communication to any of a plurality of relay devices, ~~which can relay~~ capable of relaying the one communication, in correspondence with a connection request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, comprising:

a connection request receiving unit receiving a communication connection request from a client;

a connection determining unit determining from an identifier written in a communication connection request, whether or not a communication connection ~~corresponding to the~~ used commonly for passing communications of a same one series of communications is established ~~according to an identifier written in the communication connection request~~; and

a communication connecting unit connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay destination of an established communication connection, if the communication connection is established.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) ~~The communication distribution controlling apparatus according to claim 6, further comprising~~ A communication distribution controlling apparatus distributing one communication to any of a plurality of relay devices capable of relaying the one communication in correspondence with a connection request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, comprising:

a connection request receiving unit receiving a connection request of an initial communication within a series of communications from a client;

a connection establishing unit establishing a communication connection for the communication requested to be connected;

a communication connecting unit connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay destination of the established connection; and

a notifying unit notifying a client side of an identifier corresponding to identifying the established connection as an so as to have the same identifier to be written into connection requests of communications subsequent to follow the initial communication.

8. (Original) The communication distribution controlling apparatus according to claim 7, further comprising:

a monitoring unit monitoring an elapsed time from when the initial communication within the series of communications from the client is disconnected; and

an invalidating unit invalidating the communication connection corresponding to the series of communications, and the identifier corresponding to the communication connection, when the elapsed time exceeds a predetermined value.

9. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is recorded a program for causing a computer, which distributes one communication to any of a plurality of relay devices that can relay the one communication in correspondence with a connection request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, to execute a process, the process comprising the steps of:

receiving a communication connection request from a client;

determining from an identifier written in a communication connection request,  
whether or not a communication connection ~~corresponding to the~~ used commonly for passing  
communications of a same one series of communications is established ~~according to an~~  
~~identifier written in the communication connection request;~~ and

connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay destination of an established communication connection; if the communication connection is established.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) ~~The storage medium according to claim 10,~~  
~~the process further comprising~~A computer-readable storage medium on which is recorded a  
program for causing a computer, which distributes one communication to any of a plurality of  
relay devices that can relay the one communication in correspondence with a connection  
request of the one communication within a series of communications from a client, to execute a  
process, the process comprising the steps of:

receiving a connection request of an initial communication within a series of  
communications from a client;

establishing a communication connection for the communication requested to be  
connected;

connecting the requested communication to a particular relay device as a relay  
destination of the established connection; and

notifying a client side of an identifier corresponding to~~identifying~~ the established  
connection as an~~so as to have the same identifier to be written in~~into connection requests of  
communications subsequent to follow the initial communication.

12. (Currently Amended) The storage medium according to claim 11,  
the process further comprising the steps of:

monitoring an elapsed time from when the initial communication within the  
series of communications from the client is disconnected; and

invalidating the communication connection corresponding to the series of communications, and the identifier corresponding to the communication connection, when the elapsed time exceeds a predetermined value.